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II. REMARKS

Specification Objections

The examiner objected to paragraph [0001] of the specification. Paragraph [001] has been amended to state "None."

Claim Objections

The examiner objected to claims 11, 15, 34, and 35 because of informalities. Claim 11 has been cancelled. Claims 15, 34, and 35 have been amended to address the informalities.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 112

The examiner rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. 112 because there was insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "the search results" and "the user" in line 2 of claim 21 or its independent claim 1. Applicant amended claim 1 and claim 21 to overcome the rejection.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The examiner rejected claims 1-12, 30 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marston et al. (US 2004/0260710, hereinafter "Marston") in view of Freedman et al. (US 2004/0249650, "Freedman").

Claim 1

Applicant amended claim 1 to recite "*responsive to a user specifying a topic, automatically attaching*" The examiner cites Marston, "FIG. 2, current sub message 16 that includes Subject, thereby disclosing a topic being specified and paragraph [0037] that lists Subject as a property of Sub-message." A "sub-message" is not a "topic." Moreover, appearance of a "sub-message" in a messaging system is not an act of "specifying." Therefore,

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Marston does not disclose "a topic," the act of "specifying," or the limitation of "specifying a topic."

Claim 1 recites "attaching a topic tag corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript" The examiner cites Marston, "FIG. 2, current sub-message 16 to which a subject (topic) tag is attached corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript." First, as stated above, Marston does not disclose "specifying a topic." Second, Marston's FIG. 2 (and the discussion of FIG. 2 in Marston's specification) does not disclose "attaching a topic tag to a segment of an instant messaging transcript." Indeed, Marston is silent as to actions such as "specifying," and "attaching," and to elements such as "topic," "segment," and "transcript." Furthermore, Marston does not teach or suggest "attaching a topic tag corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript."

Claim 1 recites "saving the segment" [with the attached topic tag] "to the searchable repository." The examiner cites Marston, "FIG. 1, database module 114 that stores message content 130; paragraph 0021, lines 1-5 that disclose the same details." But Marston does not disclose saving a "segment" of an instant messaging transcript. For the reasons stated above, Marston does not and cannot disclose saving a "segment" of an "instant messaging transcript" with an "attached topic tag." Finally, Marston's searchable repository is limited to a database for messages "exchanged via the relational messaging system 100 as an "S-Mail." (Marston paragraph [0018], lines 13-15.)

Claim 1 recites "attaching a topic tag ... as a *topic tag metadata*." The examiner states that Marston does not disclose attaching a topic tag to a segment of an instant messaging transcript as a topic tag metadata. The examiner cites Freedman, as showing and disclosing using metadata XML tags. Specifically, the examiner cites "FIG. 1, interaction metadata 14; FIG. 3,

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Chat metadata 26, paragraph 0038, lines 5-9, and lines 25-29 and paragraph 0044, lines 5-10 that disclose metadata associated with the corresponding content data.” Freedman states “[t]he metadata information component 14 is a set of descriptive and associative information, which are related to the actual interaction information 20 passed over the media where each interaction type has associated meta-data.” (Freedman, paragraph 0038, lines 25-29). Freedman further states “the metadata consist of information and attributes, such as addresses (From, To, CC, BCC, Reply To, and the like), subject, sensitivity, system in which the email was created, handling procedures, date and time of creation, sending, reception, and the like.” (Freedman, paragraph 0044, lines 14-18). Freedman is silent as to “a topic tag metadata.”

Claim 2

Claim 2 recites “specifying an identifier; and attaching the identifier to an instant message transcript as an identifier metadata. The examiner cites Marston, FIG. 2, Current Sub-message 16 that shows “Author” being specified as an identifier of the sub-message” and “paragraph 0037 that discloses “Author” as “one of the property of a sub-message.” Marston does not disclose “specifying an identifier” and then “attaching” the identifier to an instant messaging transcript as an “identifier metadata.”

Claim 3

Claim 3 recites “searching the repository for the topic tag; and responsive to finding the topic tag, displaying the segment.” As stated above, Marston does not disclose a “topic tag” and therefore cannot search a repository for a topic tag. Marston’s sub messages and pointers are completely different.

Claim 4

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Claim 4 recites "scanning instant messaging transcripts in the repository for a segment with the identifier metadata; responsive to finding a segment with the identifier metadata, sending a notification to an addressee on an alert notification list." Both Marston and Freedman are silent as to "scanning instant messaging transcripts" for a "segment with the identifier metadata" for the reasons stated above. In addition, both Marston and Freedman are silent as to "an addressee on an alert notification list." Marston discloses a priority notification system based on rules (paragraphs 0055 and 0056), but this is not the same as "an alert notification list."

Claim 5

Claim 5 recites "scanning instant messaging transcripts in the repository for a segment with the identifier metadata; responsive to finding a segment with the identifier metadata, exporting the segment to a pre-designated addressee." The examiner cites Freedman, paragraph 0014, lines 32-36 and Marston, paragraph 0037. The cited art is silent as to "scanning instant messaging transcripts" and for the reasons stated above, neither Marston nor Freedman disclose an "identifier metadata." Moreover, neither Marston nor Freedman disclose "exporting the segment to a pre-designated addressee."

Claim 6

Claim 6 recites "scanning instant messaging transcripts in the repository for a segment with the topic tag metadata; responsive to finding a segment with the topic tag metadata, sending a notification to an addressee on an alert notification list." Both Marston and Freedman are silent as to "scanning instant messaging transcripts" for a "segment with the identifier metadata" for the reasons stated above. In addition, both Marston and Freedman are silent as to "an addressee on an alert notification list." Marston discloses a priority notification system based on rules (paragraphs 0055 and 0056), but this is not the same as "an alert notification list."

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Claim 7

Claim 7 recites "scanning instant messaging transcripts in the repository for a segment with the topic tag metadata; responsive to finding a segment with the topic tag metadata, exporting the segment to a pre-designated addressee." Both Marston and Freedman are silent as to "scanning instant messaging transcripts" for a "segment with the identifier metadata" for the reasons stated above. In addition, both Marston and Freedman are silent as to "a pre-designated addressee." Marston discloses a priority notification system based on rules (paragraphs 0055 and 0056), but this is not the same as "a pre-designated addressee."

Claims 8-13

Claim 11 has been cancelled. Claims 8-13 depend from claim 1. Claim 1 distinguishes over the prior art for the reasons set for the above.

Claim 14, 15 and 29

Claim 14 recites "determining whether a turn has occurred; and responsive to determining whether a turn has occurred, determining whether a topic shift has occurred. The examiner cites Herf, paragraph [0026] for determining whether a turn has occurred. Herf discloses that "a 'snapshot' may be taken of the state of the system when each comment is made, and if the snapshot has changed substantially since the previous line in the conversation, this change is indicated with a thumbnail representing the change." Herf's snapshot fails to disclose applicant's "turn" because a substantial change in the snapshot of the "system" does not mean that a determination has been made that a turn occurred. Rather, a change has been detected, but this cannot perform the claim limitation of specifically determining whether a turn occurred. And Herf fails to disclose any determination that a "topic shift" has occurred.

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The examiner also rejects claim 14 over Zhong which discloses a "new topic button" on a GUI. The examiner argues that a user could determine a topic shift and then use the "new topic button" to mark the new topic. But such a user action is not subject to a determination that a turn has occurred. More significantly, such a user action is not an automatic function. Claim 14 has been amended to recite that the action takes place automatically.

Claim 15 recites "responsive to determining that a topic shift has occurred, identifying a new topic; and attaching the new topic marker to a topic segment corresponding to the chat transcript following the new topic marker. The examiner cites Herf, paragraph [0026] for determining whether a turn has occurred. Herf discloses that "a 'snapshot' may be taken of the state of the system when each comment is made, and if the snapshot has changed substantially since the previous line in the conversation, this change is indicated with a thumbnail representing the change." Herf's snapshot fails to disclose applicant's "turn."

The examiner also rejects claim 15 over Zhong which discloses a "new topic button" on a GUI. The examiner argues that a user could determine a topic shift and then use the "new topic button" to mark the new topic. But such a user action is not subject to a determination that a turn has occurred. More significantly, such a user action is not an automatic function. Applicants' claimed method has been amended to recite the action taking place automatically.

Claim 29 recites "determining whether a turn has occurred; and responsive to determining whether a turn has occurred, determining whether a topic shift has occurred; responsive to determining that a topic shift has occurred, identifying a new metadata; and attaching the new metadata to a second segment." The examiner cites Herf, paragraph [0026] for determining whether a turn has occurred. Herf discloses that "a 'snapshot' may be taken of the state of the system when each comment is made, and if the snapshot has changed substantially

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since the previous line in the conversation, this change is indicated with a thumbnail representing the change.” Herf’s snapshot fails to disclose applicant’s “turn” because a substantial change in the snapshot of the “system” does not mean that a determination has been made that a turn occurred. Rather, a change has been detected, but this cannot perform the claim limitation of specifically determining whether a turn occurred. And Herf fails to disclose any determination that a “topic shift” has occurred.

The examiner also rejects claim 29 over Zhong which discloses a “new topic button” on a GUI. The examiner argues that a user could determine a topic shift and then use the “new topic button” to mark the new topic. But such a user action is not subject to a determination that a turn has occurred. More significantly, such a user action is not an automatic function. Claim 29 has been amended to recite that the actions take place automatically.

Claim 24

Claim 24 recites “storing a structured instant message transcript in a repository on a server computer connected to the Internet; and using a filter in a program on a remote computer, searching the repository for a metadata attached to a segment of the structured instant message. The examiner states that Marston does not disclose “attaching a topic tag to a segment of an instant messaging transcript as a topic tag metadata.” The examiner cites Freedman, as showing and disclosing using metadata XML tags. Specifically, the examiner cites “FIG. 1, interaction metadata 14; FIG. 3, Chat metadata 26, paragraph 0038, lines 5-9, and lines 25-29 and paragraph 0044, lines 5-10 that disclose metadata associated with the corresponding content data.” Freedman states “[t]he metadata information component 14 is a set of descriptive and associative information, which are related to the actual interaction information 20 passed over the media where each interaction type has associated meta-data.” (Freedman, paragraph 0038, lines 25-29).

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Freedman further states "the metadata consist of information and attributes, such as addresses (From, To, CC, BCC, Reply To, and the like), subject, sensitivity, system in which the email was created, handling procedures, date and time of creation, sending, reception, and the like." (Freedman, paragraph 0044, lines 14-18). Freedman is silent as to "a topic tag metadata."

Claim 30

Claim 30 recites "a computer-usable medium; wherein the computer usable medium comprises instructions for a computer to perform steps comprising: prompting a user to specify a topic; attaching a topic tag corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript as a topic tag metadata; and saving the segment to a searchable repository connected to the computer-usable medium by the Internet. Claim 30 recites "specifying a topic." The examiner cites Marston, "FIG. 2, current sub message 16 that includes Subject, thereby disclosing a topic being specified and paragraph [0037] that lists Subject as a property of Sub-message." A "sub-message" is not a "topic." Moreover, appearance of a "sub-message" in a messaging system is not an act of "specifying." Therefore, Marston does not disclose "a topic," the act of "specifying," or the element of "specifying a topic." In addition, claim 30 recites "prompting a user to specify a topic ..." and Marston is also silent regarding prompting a user.

Claim 30 recites "attaching a topic tag corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript" The examiner cites Marston, "FIG. 2, current sub-message 16 to which a subject (topic) tag is attached corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript." First, as stated above, Marston does not disclose "specifying a topic." Second, Marston's FIG. 2 (and the discussion of FIG. 2 in Marston's specification) does not disclose "attaching a topic tag to a segment of an instant messaging transcript." Indeed, Marston is silent as to actions such as "specifying," and "attaching," and to elements such as "topic,"

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"segment," and "transcript." Furthermore, Marston does not teach or suggest "attaching a topic tag to segment of an instant messaging transcript."

Claim 30 recites "saving the segment" [with the attached topic tag] "to the searchable repository." The examiner cites Marston, "FIG. 1, database module 114 that stores message content 130; paragraph 0021, lines 1-5 that disclose the same details." But Marston does not disclose saving a "segment" of an instant messaging transcript. For the reasons stated above, Marston does not and cannot disclose saving a "segment" of an "instant messaging transcript" with an "attached topic tag." Finally, Marston's searchable repository is limited to a database for messages "exchanged via the relational messaging system 100 as an "S-Mail." (Marston paragraph [0018], lines 13-15.

Claim 30 recites "attaching a topic tag ... as a *topic tag metadata*." The examiner states that Marston does not disclose attaching a topic tag to a segment of an instant messaging transcript as a topic tag metadata. The examiner cites Freedman, as showing and disclosing using metadata XML tags. Specifically, the examiner cites "FIG. 1, interaction metadata 14; FIG. 3, Chat metadata 26, paragraph 0038, lines 5-9, and lines 25-29 and paragraph 0044, lines 5-10 that disclose metadata associated with the corresponding content data." Freedman states "[t]he metadata information component 14 is a set of descriptive and associative information, which are related to the actual interaction information 20 passed over the media where each interaction type has associated meta-data." (Freedman, paragraph 0038, lines 25-29). Freedman further states "the metadata consist of information and attributes, such as addresses (From, To, CC, BCC, Reply To, and the like), subject, sensitivity, system in which the email was created, handling procedures, date and time of creation, sending, reception, and the like." (Freedman, paragraph 0044, lines 14-18). Freedman is silent as to "a topic tag metadata."

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Claim 33

Claim 33 recites a system including “a first instruction in the memory of the first computer to cause the processor to prompt a user to specify a topic for a chat; responsive to the user specifying a topic for the chat, a second instruction in the memory of the first computer to cause the processor to attach a topic tag corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript as a topic tag metadata; a third instruction to save the segment to the searchable repository.”

Claim 33 recites “specifying a topic.” The examiner cites Marston, “FIG. 2, current sub message 16 that includes Subject, thereby disclosing a topic being specified and paragraph [0037] that lists Subject as a property of Sub-message.” A “sub-message” is not a “topic.” Moreover, appearance of a “sub-message” in a messaging system is not an act of “specifying.” Therefore, Marston does not disclose “a topic,” the act of “specifying,” or the element of “specifying a topic.” In addition, claim 33 recites “prompting a user to specify a topic ...” and Marston is also silent regarding prompting a user.

Claim 33 recites “attaching a topic tag corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript” The examiner cites Marston, “FIG. 2, current sub-message 16 to which a subject (topic) tag is attached corresponding to the topic to a segment of an instant messaging transcript.” First, as stated above, Marston does not disclose “specifying a topic.” Second, Marston’s FIG. 2 (and the discussion of FIG. 2 in Marston’s specification) does not disclose “attaching a topic tag to a segment of an instant messaging transcript.” Indeed, Marston is silent as to actions such as “specifying,” and “attaching,” and to elements such as “topic,” “segment,” and “transcript.” Furthermore, Marston does not teach or suggest “attaching a topic tag to segment of an instant messaging transcript.”

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Claim 33 recites "saving the segment" [with the attached topic tag] "to the searchable repository." The examiner cites Marston, "FIG. 1, database module 114 that stores message content 130; paragraph 0021, lines 1-5 that disclose the same details." But Marston does not disclose saving a "segment" of an instant messaging transcript. For the reasons stated above, Marston does not and cannot disclose saving a "segment" of an "instant messaging transcript" with an "attached topic tag." Finally, Marston's searchable repository is limited to a database for messages "exchanged via the relational messaging system 100 as an "S-Mail." (Marston paragraph [0018], lines 13-15.

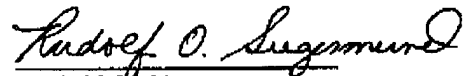
Claim 1 recites "attaching a topic tag ... as a *topic tag metadata*." The examiner states that Marston does not disclose attaching a topic tag to a segment of an instant messaging transcript as a topic tag metadata. The examiner cites Freedman, as showing and disclosing using metadata XML tags. Specifically, the examiner cites "FIG. 1, interaction metadata 14; FIG. 3, Chat metadata 26, paragraph 0038, lines 5-9, and lines 25-29 and paragraph 0044, lines 5-10 that disclose metadata associated with the corresponding content data." Freedman states "[t]he metadata information component 14 is a set of descriptive and associative information, which are related to the actual interaction information 20 passed over the media where each interaction type has associated meta-data." (Freedman, paragraph 0038, lines 25-29). Freedman further states "the metadata consist of information and attributes, such as addresses (From, To, CC, BCC, Reply To, and the like), subject, sensitivity, system in which the email was created, handling procedures, date and time of creation, sending, reception, and the like." (Freedman, paragraph 0044, lines 14-18). Freedman is silent as to "a topic tag metadata."

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Conclusion

Applicant submits that the claims are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



Rudolf O. Siegesmund
Registration No. 37,720
Gordon & Rees LLP
Suite 2800
2100 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75201
214-231-4660
214-461-4053 (fax)
rsiegesmund@gordonrees.com